

We hope to make our "Notes and Queries" department the means of supplying a large amount of information, on points which suggest themselves from time to time, to our friends, as they "go their busy rounds," and thus help to solve some of the perplexities and doubts which often arise. We hope to be the medium of communication between practitioners in different parts of the country, and promote the habit of thought, reflection and observation among our younger brethren.

Furthermore, we shall devote our energies to the elevation and consolidation of the regular profession, believing that, with a membership of nearly two thousand, we are strong enough, if formed into a Grand Lodge, to assert our rights and maintain our privileges in the face of any opposition likely to be met with.

Finally, as we have no enemies, we expect to be handled with gloves; being men of peace we desire no war, but if any one should in the future desire a tilt with us, we warn all such, that we belong to that class so much beloved by our old friend Johnson, "good haters"; but as we have for many years discarded the lancet, for veratrum viride and opium, we firmly believe that no inflammation or disturbance is likely to arise among our journalistic members, which cannot be satisfactorily controlled or allayed by the judicious use of anodynes and sedatives.

"Forewarned, forearmed."

UNIVERSITY DEGREES.

Now that the examinations for the license to practice in Ontario have been placed in the hands of a central Board, it behooves the Universities to consider well the new position which they will occupy. Hitherto their function has been that of examining the youth of the Province, with a view of ascertaining their fitness for the practice of medicine. Now, however, the medical profession of Ontario enters upon a new and untried phase of its existence, and the various teaching bodies have to submit their students, if not to a higher, at any rate to a more uniform test of merit. But our object, at present, is rather to consider the effect which this change may have upon our Universities, who still have the right, which they will no doubt largely exercise, of conferring medical degrees; which, though not entitling the holder to practice, will (if the power be judiciously used) on that account only be considered the greater honour.

The licensing system of the mother country, much as it may need improvement, possesses great

advantages in this respect. The status of every member of the profession is very readily determined by his qualifications. England has her qualified practitioners, Licentiates of the Society of Apothecaries, and Members of the Royal College of Surgeons; men who are unquestionably fully qualified for the practice of the profession. Yet it is not to such that her high hospital appointments and lucrative consulting practices lie open. For these, higher qualifications are necessary; and the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Membership or Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians, or the M. B. or M. D. of London University, are honours by which a medical man in England can prove himself entitled to a high position in the profession.

On the other hand, in the United States, every institution alike grants the degree of M. D., and every legally qualified practitioner is a doctor of medicine. Hence a graduate of one of the highest American universities—some of which are unsurpassed anywhere—ranks no higher than one from a college where the curriculum is imperfect, and the examination almost nominal.

In this way not only have the public no guide (except, perhaps, a bitter experience) by which they can ascertain the real qualifications of a man, but also the practitioner himself loses that greatest stimulus to high attainments—a proper recognition of them by the profession. It is only by encouraging men to aspire to something above mediocrity, by distinguishing between the average practitioner and the thoroughly scientific physician and surgeon, that we can raise up amongst us a class of highly educated men.

So far we have done well. We have succeeded in establishing, though not without defects, the great principle of a Central Examining Board, which alone admits to the profession, and guarantees that all its members are properly qualified. But now let us go further, and let all our Universities raise the standard of their degrees. While they were the principal means by which the profession was supplied, such a proceeding would have been manifestly unfair. But now that their degrees have no such power, they can afford to take a higher stand, and make them the stamp of the thoroughly educated and scientific physician.

We commence the publication in this number of two most valuable articles from the *Practitioner*: one, on the hypodermic use of morphia in diseases of the heart, the other on the use of ether in the neuroses and spasms of the aged. We commend both to the careful perusal of our readers.